

natural disaster like those now devastated by Hurricane Katrina. While the amendment was defeated on a party line vote without any debate, we hope that in light of recent events our colleagues will recognize the importance of protecting our most financially vulnerable Americans.

This bill will prevent new bankruptcy provisions from having adverse and unintended consequences for the hundreds of thousands now facing financial catastrophe by providing needed flexibility for victims of natural disasters in bankruptcy proceedings.

This common sense bill will insure that we do not compound a natural disaster with a man made financial disaster. I hope there will be bipartisan support for expedited consideration of this critical legislation.

HONORING THE MALAKOFF
ROTARY CLUB

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 8, 2005

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to commemorate two significant anniversaries of Rotary International. This year, Rotary International celebrated its 100th anniversary. From its humble roots in Chicago, Illinois, Rotary has grown into a worldwide organization of business and professional leaders who provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill and peace in the world. Since 1943, Rotary International has distributed more than \$1.1 billion to combat Polio, promote cultural exchanges and encourage community service.

I also want to recognize the Malakoff Rotary Club for their 66 years of service to Henderson County. Throughout its history, the Malakoff Rotary Club has achieved great success in carrying out the mission of Rotary International.

In past years, the Malakoff Rotary Club has raised money to provide scholarships for local students and sponsored programs to improve area literacy. In addition, they have sponsored numerous activities with Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) programs, Eustace Children's Home and the Henderson County Crisis Center.

Through these initiatives, the Malakoff Rotary Club exemplifies the values of service and charity that lie at the heart of American society. As the Congressional representative of the members of this outstanding organization, it is my distinct pleasure to honor them today on the floor of the United States House of Representatives.

EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT TO MEET IMMEDIATE NEEDS ARISING FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF HURRICANE KATRINA, 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 2, 2005

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, my deepest sympathies are with those families who are af-

fected by the worst natural disaster our country has ever seen. I also extend my gratitude to those first responders, members of the U.S. Coast Guard, the National Guard, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for their aid and assistance in relief and recovery efforts.

Like the rest of America, I was extremely frustrated and angered with the lack of preparedness and timely response by the Federal Government. This was an instance where the system failed. Five days after the hurricane, thousands were still without food, shelter and clothing. We saw on television grueling pictures of our most needy: the poor, elderly, and children stranded in unbelievable conditions. Many Americans, Democrats and Republicans alike—even President Bush himself—have recognized that the initial federal response was “not acceptable”.

New Orleans is the only major American city below sea level, and it is wedged between Lake Pontchartrain and the Mississippi River. In the case of a bad hurricane hitting, experts have said for some time now, that the city could “fill up like a cereal bowl, killing tens of thousands and laying waste to the city’s architectural heritage.” Despite speculation that a disaster of this magnitude could occur in this region, the President’s recent budgets have actually proposed to reduce funding for flood prevention in the New Orleans area.

In June 2004, Walter Maestri, emergency management chief for Jefferson Parish, fretted to The Times-Picayune in New Orleans: “It appears that the money has been moved in the President’s budget to handle homeland security and the war in Iraq, and I suppose that’s the price we pay. Nobody locally is happy that the levees can’t be finished, and we are doing everything we can to make the case that this is a security issue for us.”

With hundreds of millions of dollars and 40 percent of our National Guard already dedicated to the War in Iraq, Katrina is a glaring example of the question of whether or not we are able to effectively handle problems that arise here at home.

While this is most certainly concerning, the important thing right now, is ensuring that the Federal Government is doing everything humanly possible to help the victims of this catastrophe. As this crisis continues, our first priority must be to provide those affected with basic human needs.

Looking to the days and weeks ahead, Congress also needs to investigate the lack of response of government and look into what hampered relief efforts at the most critical time. In this regard, particular focus should be placed on the organization of DHS and FEMA.

Again, it is clear that there was a lack of adequate preparedness and response. I had concerns during the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) about whether it was appropriate to fold this vital agency for national emergency preparedness into DHS, rather than leave it as an independent agency.

I voted against the inclusion of FEMA into the Department of Homeland Security back in 2002. My concerns in this instance may have been well founded, as FEMA’s initial response was lacking at best and failed to deliver urgently needed help.

I have joined with Congressman DINGELL to introduce legislation to remove FEMA from DHS so it will once again be an independent agency with cabinet-level status. The bill also

requires that the Director of FEMA be an emergency management professional, and creates two deputy directors—one responsible for natural disasters and the other responsible for terrorism related disasters with each required to have significant experience related to their positions.

While this legislation would be a start in addressing concerns of the American people about the handling of emergency situations, the fact remains that it is still the responsibility of the appropriate agencies to have comprehensive plans in place beforehand in order to avoid the situation we are currently finding ourselves in.

At this time, we don’t have all of the answers as to why relief and recovery efforts fell short. One thing we do know is this national tragedy in the Gulf States highlights the importance of the ability of our first responders to communicate in the event of a national emergency. Public safety, government and military leaders have all said that the inability of local, State, and Federal agencies to communicate was a major obstacle that made the crisis worse. As President Bush said after September 11th, the ability for first responders to communicate is critical in the hours after a crisis. Unfortunately, it has been 4 years since September 11th, and clearly we have made little progress in addressing our first responders’ communications needs. I call on Congress to make a real commitment to the public safety officers who are working so bravely and diligently to help the victims of this national disaster.

Finally, I was very pleased Congress acted quickly to pass the \$10.5 billion emergency supplemental bill. This is an important first step in the effort to provide direct relief. We are now hearing that the devastation this deadly storm has left in its path may cost upwards of \$40 billion. That is equal to the funding provided in the emergency supplemental bill passed after the September 11th terrorist attacks. Congress must provide whatever is necessary to help our Southern friends.

It is a travesty that here in America we have seen our own citizens affected by Hurricane Katrina suffer without the basic necessities required for survival, including food, water, clothing and shelter. However, communities across our country are coming together to help provide much needed assistance. The Mayor of Detroit, Michigan, has announced that Detroit will provide transportation to the Detroit region, temporary housing, food, and even open their schools and provide counseling for the victims. This is just one example of many across our Nation where the American people are pulling together and showing an outpouring of generosity and regard for humanity.

My thoughts and prayers are with all of those who have suffered throughout this tragedy. My colleagues and I in Congress must and will do whatever is in our power to assist the ongoing rescue and relief efforts.

ART CANTU: 2005 LABOR LEADER
OF THE YEAR

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 8, 2005

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, today I acknowledge a great friend of labor, Art Cantu—

named the 2005 Labor Leader of the Year. Art is currently the Secretary-Treasurer and Principal Executive Officer of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local 36, which represents Building Material, Construction, Industrial, Professional and Technical Employees.

Art is a native San Diegan and graduated from Chula Vista High School in 1975. Art also attended San Diego City College where he completed the Business and Labor Studies Program.

Art began his career working at Nabisco Company for Teamsters Local 316 in Syracuse, New York in May of 1976. In December 1977, he transferred to Local 36 and began driving for Oberg Construction and later at Bechtel Power Corporation at the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station and then moved to Hubbard Construction Company. In January 1990, Art began working at Teamsters Local 36 as an Organizer and Business Agent, and in May of 1995 was elected as the Recording Secretary on the Executive Board of Teamsters Local 36. In August of 2000, Art was appointed Secretary-Treasurer. He has since been re-elected twice.

Art serves as co-chair for San Diego County Teamsters Construction Trust for Health and Welfare, Pension, Vacation and Training Trusts, as well as Alternate Trustee of the San Diego County Teamsters Employers-Insurance Trust Fund. Art currently serves on the Advisory Committee of the Industrial Relations Research Association (IRRA), and the Executive Board of the San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council as well as being the Treasurer and Executive Board member of The San Diego County Building and Construction Trades Council. His newest position is with the San Diego County Chamber of Commerce Transportation Sub-committee.

Art also serves as the Recording Secretary of the California Teamsters Hispanic Caucus and the Executive Director of the National Teamsters Hispanic Caucus. Art is extremely proud of organizing the Annual Teamsters Hispanic Golf Tournament held at Torrey Pines every year. The event has raised over \$300,000 in scholarships for the sons and daughters of Teamsters. Since 2000, Art and Kris Hartnett have co-chaired the John S. Lyons Memorial Banquet which has raised over \$1.2 million.

Art currently resides in Carmel Mountain Ranch in San Diego. Art has 2 sons, Art Jr., 26, and Wesley, 24. Art Jr. currently works in Seattle, Washington and is a software engineer for Marchex Corporation. Wes works for the City of Santa Monica in the Engineering Department. Art's proudest moment was seeing Art Jr. graduate from Berkeley and Stanford and Wes from the University of California at Santa Barbara. Art enjoys golf, tennis and traveling.

I am proud to salute Art Cantu—Labor Leader of the Year.

CONGRATULATING RABBI AMIEL
WOHL

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 8, 2005

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Rabbi Amiel Wohl of New Rochelle

for being honored with the 2005 Yitzhak Rabin Peacemaker Award.

The Yitzhak Rabin Peacemaker Award is given annually to an individual who has sought to bring better understanding and harmonious relationships between various religious and ethnic groups. Rabbi Wohl has carried out this mission time and time again, including efforts to aid Christians suffering in Lebanon through his organization, People for Relief in Lebanon.

Rabbi Wohl has been committed to inter-faith communication since his arrival at Temple Israel of New Rochelle in 1973. Almost immediately, he coordinated the Interreligious Council, which brought together Catholic, Protestant and Jewish houses of worship and religious organizations. He has also been instrumental in other groups dedicated to inter-faith communication, including the Westchester Jewish Conference, which has sought to cross both denominational and municipal lines.

Rabbi Wohl has exemplified the ideals we seek in individuals of faith. From creating the Coalition for Mutual Respect in 1979 to traveling as far as Sacramento, California, to participate in inter-faith efforts, Rabbi Wohl has worked tirelessly to sustain the dialogue necessary to address conflicts among the different faiths in our country.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Rabbi Amiel Wohl on his accomplishments and in congratulating him on receiving this award.

BUSH POLICIES CONTRIBUTE TO HURRICANE CATASTROPHE

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 8, 2005

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to outline how President Bush's policies contribute to the Hurricane Katrina catastrophe that took place in the Gulf Coast area of our nation. Just as in Iraq, the President's policies and unbelievable mismanagement on the domestic front have brought pain and suffering to American people.

Thousands of people may have been killed by Hurricane Katrina and many more could die in its aftermath because of the President's refusal to heed the calls of the governors for help in repairing the infrastructure in their states. In Louisiana, everybody knew that the levees that hold back flood waters were in disrepair. But instead of listening to the governors, the President cut funding for this purpose. Again and again vital domestic priorities have been sacrificed in order to pay for the occupation and rebuilding of Iraq, and these choices are now being revealed as harmful to our nation and people.

In addition to depriving the affecting areas of the funding that would have enabled them to prepare for Hurricane Katrina. The President's commitment to Iraq has impaired the response to the crisis. It is this commitment that has contributed to the slow response of federal troops who should have been on alert before the hurricane struck. Now, as bedlam reigns in New Orleans, 35 percent of Louisiana's and 37 percent of Mississippi's National Guard troops are in Iraq. The hurricane is clear evidence of how the war directly affects the domestic security of our country.

The President is destroying the fabric of America with a combined policy of war, tax cuts for the wealthy, and reductions in spending for domestic needs. These policies are supported by the Republican-dominated Congress. Even so, it was shocking to read reports that DENNIS HASTERT, the Speaker of the House, said that rebuilding New Orleans made no sense to him.

The President's policies have not only made us less secure, they have widened the chasm between the well-to-do and the poor. The people who couldn't get out of New Orleans to escape the storm were predominantly Black and poor. They stayed behind not because they wanted to risk the danger of the hurricane, but because they don't have cars or any other means of escape. No one is even talking about the poor in more rural areas—Blacks and Whites—who have not even been reached by rescue teams.

President Bush has tried to turn this tragedy into a political victory by flying in on a helicopter to examine the damage. But he is in store for more genuine outrage resulting from his failed policy in Iraq and the anger of the U.S. governors whose constituents are paying the price for the domestic policies of the "war president".

Please find below my letter to President Bush about the Federal Government's response to Hurricane Katrina.

SEPTEMBER 2, 2005.

President GEORGE W. BUSH,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR PRESIDENT BUSH: I am writing to strongly urge you to use your power and leadership to provide the most aggressive possible response to the humanitarian crisis taking place in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. The response so far has been unsatisfactory.

Food, water, medicine and emergency housing is in critical need. In addition, with the crisis seemingly affecting poor people most, arrangements should be made for emergency short term grants and loans to individuals, particularly those who head families and are taking care of children and the elderly.

Further, while we are all dismayed by television pictures of looters, we must not allow the focus of our humanitarian efforts to be diminished in any way by those actions. While criminal activity that threatens lives should not be tolerated, we must use maximum discretion in the use of force against individuals who may be motivated by poverty and hunger.

I have received many calls from constituents as well as Americans across the country, who believe that the victims of this catastrophe are receiving a lesser government response than would be provided for people of means. True or not, this perception will be aggravated if in coming days Americans do not see a more forceful and creative response to this crisis, whether it means using large military planes to bring in supplies, including temporary housing and the use of hotels or even cruise ships.

Mr. President, we must raise the level of response to this crisis, the greatest natural disaster in the nation's history, and it must be done immediately.

Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,

CHARLES B. RANGEL,
Member of Congress.